

# Bibliology: The Bible and its meaning for us today

## #bibleschool #doctrineofthe bible #biblelecture

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 09 May 2024

[0:00] So tonight we're looking at the subject of Bibliology, the Bible. Really Bibliology is a fancy word of saying a study of the Bible, a doctrine of the Bible.

! So you've got your notes there, I'll kind of touch along as we go. And so the word Bible means books. It's in the Greek, biblia or singular, biblos.

So Bible comes from this Greek word. Bibliology means the study of the Bible. Of course we know the Bible is that inspired source of knowledge about God, about the Lord, salvation and of eternity. And without a proper view of the Bible, our views on these other issues can get clouded and distorted. So having that firm foundation, the Bible foundation, really matters.

Here's a quote I picked up. It's kind of tongue in cheek really, because a lot of people say they heard from God, you know, and they've got this idea that God speaks to them kind of routinely.

[1:02] But as someone has put it really and truly, to hear God speak, turn the light on and open your Bible. If you want to hear him speak audibly, read it out loud. And so basically this is God's word.

This is how we hear God. We hear God as he gives us his word in written form in our Bible. And if we want to hear God speak to us aloud, to speak audibly, we read out what it says with our mouth. We read the Bible out loud. So it's just putting that truth across that really, if we want to hear from God, we go to the Bible. So we're looking at some of the things that makes the Bible important for us and some of the special characteristics of the Bible.

And so firstly, uniqueness. The Bible is unique. The Bible is the word of God. There is no other. And the Bible is the world's best seller.

It's the world's best life changer. And it's set apart really from all other mere books of men. So the Bible is unique. It's one of a kind. And there is no divine revelation beyond scripture.

[2:08] When you think of the Bible, really, it's more than a book. In fact, it's a library. It's unique. It's God's book. So it deserves our serious investigation and our response.

It's God's letter to humanity. God's love letter, really. And the theme of the Bible throughout is that man is the same. Why is that man is sinful and needs a savior. And Christ is that central one, that central person and theme of the whole book.

So the Bible stands as that unique book more than any other book in the world. It's got that supernatural characteristic. And it's beyond comparison with any other book that you could think of. And so it's true. It's entirely reliable. It's powerful. And it's alive, transforming, life giving. When you think about the Bible, really, it's a rich library of 66 books.

It's not just one. It's 66 books. And these 66 books were written by over 40 different divinely inspired writers. And it was written over this huge span of time, too, some 1600 years time span.

[3:14] It was written by kings, shepherds, fishermen, politicians, tax collectors, prophets on three different continents, in three different languages.

So Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic. Working through the Holy Spirit, God used ordinary people and their personalities to convey his messages to humanity through the ages.

So we read, as we come to later there, 2 Peter 1, that the Holy Spirit moved these people, moved these men to speak and write. He worked in and through them. He used their experiences and their personalities to compose the scripture in such a way that when they were finished, it was God's word written by human authors.

So in spite of all their different backgrounds and cultures, these human writers were used by God to provide this united volume, the Bible.

And it dovetails together without any contradiction. So it's got this wonderful unity, continuity, and there's amazing patterns of numbers, too, Bible numerics. So 2 Peter 1 tells us this.

[4:24] It says, 2 Peter 1, verse 19, We have also a more sure word of prophecy, where unto you do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts, knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They were carried along by the Holy Ghost.

God still used their own personalities and their own unique personal characteristics, but they were moved by God to pen these words. So when you think about it, of this book, from its beginning to end, it was written some 1600 years over that period, that time span.

And there was no human planning. So they didn't collude. They didn't get together. They couldn't. They were so far apart in time. And the Bible then, it grew part by part, book by book, century by century, by this orderly progressive manner.

No other book has been written in such a way. So it's got that real uniqueness about it. And also the Bible's got a unique representation of God as infinite, sovereign, triune, holy, loving, of man, a sinful, yet significant to God of sin, with its severe consequences.

[5:45] The message of salvation as independent of human efforts based solely upon the work of Christ. So it's got a unique message for all of us, the Bible.

Another thing about the Bible is it's inspired. It's inspired or God breathed. So inspiration is that superintendence of God over the human authors using their own individual personalities.

They composed and recorded without error his revelation to man. And that familiar scripture to Timothy 3:16, it says, all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

So inspiration is both verbal and this other technical word, plenary. So in other words, every word, it's verbally inspired.

Every word of the Bible is inspired. And inspiration extends to even single words and phrases. God chose the precise words, the phrases, and also the vocabulary and grammar of the human authors.

[6:53] So it's verbally inspired. And secondly, it's fully inspired, this technical word, plenary. So it's fully inspired, the whole bit of it, the whole lot of it. Every single portion of the Bible is fully and completely inspired by God.

God breathed it to us through these human writers. So there's another technical word here, the whole canon. Canon means the 66 books, the whole numbers of books is called the canon.

And they're the books that were officially accepted by the church as being the word of God. So we'll talk a bit about that later. So inspiration, it's verbal, every word, it's the whole thing.

The whole book is inspired of God. Another truth about the Bible is it's got a wonderful unity to it. And really, that's amazing, as I say, because it's been over such a time span, 40 different human writers or so.

And yet it's got a wonderful unity. And this is best accounted for by the fact that it's God's book. It's got deity. It's got one mind behind it.

[7:59] One mind has written this book through these human writers, one author. And from Genesis to Revelation, you've got the whole Bible. It's got this united theme. It's got consistency in its concepts.

It's logical. It's agreed in doctrine. There's this marvelous unity and harmony right from beginning to end, the whole thing. And when you look at the Bible, it's got this unity as in it's got one doctrinal system, one moral standard, one plan of salvation, one program of the ages.

And at several accounts of similar or same incidents or teachings, they're not contradictory, but they're supplementary. So you've got like the four writers of the Gospels.

Sometimes they saw the same events and recorded just from what they saw of those events. So they're supplementary, not contradictory. And the Bible's got one theme, salvation.

It's got one problem, sin, one cure, which is salvation through one person, Christ, and for one purpose, to glorify God. Of course, some of those things were less obvious in the Old Testament. [9:04] And then we can see it progressively clearer as we get through the New Testament. But there's that wonderful unity there. Another thing about the Bible is that it's got a continuity, a continuity.

So you see this historical sequence of the Bible begins at creation, where the creation of the present world follows through to ultimately the creation of the new heaven and the new earth in Revelation.

So the doctrine of the Bible is progressively revealed, progressively presented from that elementary first introduction to the more complex development. So it talks about, you know, first the seed and then the ear.

It's kind of Mark 4. It talks about the fact that it kind of flourishes, it develops, it grows from that seed. And really the seeds of most Bible doctrines are found even in the book of Genesis. And then with each additional book, there's more revelation that comes to light until the final book, the book of Revelation. So here's a quote here in your notes.

[10:03] It says, Without the possibility of collusion, often with centuries between, one writer of Scripture takes up an earlier revelation, adds to it, lays down the pen, and in due time another man, moved by the Holy Spirit, and another and another, add new details till the whole is complete.

So it's got this continuity to it. Another truth about the Bible is the Bible's got an inerrancy. It's inerrant. It's both inerrant and infallible. So inerrant means it's true.

It's free from error. Inerrant means there's no error. It's free from error. And as the Word of God, we can see that there's no error in it because the author has got no error. He's the source of all truth. And as his Word has no errors, it's incapable of having errors. It's totally accurate, and it is truth. It is reliable. So inerrancy, when you think about the Bible, it applies to matters of faith, but also to everything recorded in Scripture, whether it's history or science or any other matter.

As much as critics have tried to pull it apart and find fault, they haven't been able to. Inerrancy allows for an accurate record of false statements, such as Satan's lies to Eve.

[11:15] So in the Bible, there are lies when it's quoting Satan, for example, as he lied to Eve. Half God said, etc. Everything that the Bible teaches is true.

It's divinely inspired and authoritative as the Word of God. And inerrancy is based on the character of God, because of course, our Lord is without error. And God is true.

It says, let God be true and every man a liar. The point that we're making here is that it's absolutely true, God's Word, as God is true.

It says in Psalm 100, verse 5, that the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth to all generations. We can take heart that the Word of God is true.

Psalm 119, verse 160, it says, Thy Word is true from the beginning, and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever. John 17, 17, the Lord prays, sanctify them through thy truth.

[12:16] Thy Word is truth. And then you've got Psalm 12, verse 6, The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

So you think about the Bible, it's got that stamp of authority, of truth about it. You can trust the accuracy of your Bible. And it's got divine authority behind it, in all things that pertain to life and godliness.

So it's got a great trustworthiness that we can take heart in it, the precise authority of it, the accuracy of it, the reliability of it. And you can depend on it for spiritual matters, and it's trustworthy for all matters of life too.

So the Bible is the guide for you from earth to heaven. The Bible is a divinely given guide for travelers to eternity. If we want to know the way to heaven, we go to the Bible.

Here's a great quote I picked up. It tells us this book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers.

[13:17] Its doctrine is holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable, so they cannot be changed. Read it

to be wise, believe it to be saved, and practice it to be holy.

It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter.

Here heaven is open, and the gates of hell are disclosed. Christ is the grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the fee.

And in your notes there it says, Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, health to the soul, and a river of pleasure. It is given to you here in this life, will be open at the judgment, and is established forever.

It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its contents. So, see that the Bible is that divinely given guide for travelers to eternity.

[14:24] Another truth about the Bible is its authority. Now, we know in contrast to that, you've got Roman Catholicism, that claims tradition as their authority.

You've got modernism or rationalism, they claim reason to be the highest authority. And mysticism claims the inner voice to be the sole criterion for religious faith, apart from prayer and the word of God.

Bible believers stand upon the scriptures, though, as the inerrant record of divine revelation, the sole authority for faith and practice. So, you know, that's really fundamental Bible Christianity, is that the Bible is our guide for all matters of faith and practice.

So, what we believe and how we live, what we do. The Bible is God's word. It's got God's authority. It's got divine authorship. And because it's inspired, it has an authority.

It's trustworthy. It's truthful. It's authoritative from Genesis to Revelation. The Bible is the very word of God. Interesting that it says, Thus saith the Lord over 3,800 times.

[15:32] So, that's significant, isn't it? God is speaking to us. So, since the Bible is the word of God Almighty, it's binding upon all men. And it's God's ultimate, absolute authority for faith and practice.

Its authority is final. So, in other words, it rules out experience. Some people would say, Well, it's the Bible plus how I feel, or my feelings or sensations or my emotions or my perceptions or my leadings or my inklings of this or that.

But no, the Bible is the authority, the final authority, the absolute authority. The Bible is God's word to man. So, God discloses everything that he wants us to know about himself, his workings in the past, his plans for the future.

Everything in the Bible is a part of his divine revelation. And so, he tells us, Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth.

The word Jesus uses here is the noun. So, he's not just saying God's word is true. He's saying it is the truth, the truth. We can rely upon it. Amen. So, it's got God's authority. God's authority.

[16:38] And following on from that, there's this word sufficiency. So, we believe in this doctrine. It's called the sufficiency of scripture. So, really, everything that we need to know is contained in the Bible as far as doctrine and practice.

So, it's got a sufficiency, a finality. So, it's got God's full final revelation to man. It's all that we need to live a life of godliness according to his will. And throughout the Bible, we see that God has given all things, it says, all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

And it tells us, 2 Timothy 3, that his word is inspired. It's profitable. It's profitable. It's useful. In other words, if we want to know what to believe, if we want to know what's right and what's wrong, if we want to find the right way, if we want to keep on the right path, we go to the Bible for that.

That's one of the modern problems we've got in churchdom today, particularly in the Catholic Churches. Particularly in the charismatic Pentecostal world, is that they're getting outside of the sufficiency of scripture.

They're trying to add other things that are actually not even biblical. That routinely they're manifestations. It's actually not in the Bible. So, they've lost this truth, this important concept of the sufficiency, the sufficiency of scripture.

[17:54] Another truth about the Bible is the Bible is a revelation. It's whereby God makes himself known, revelation. So, the word revealed suggests it was something that is brought forth that was hidden.

Something made plain that was obscure. And something lighted up that was in shadow. And God made man in his own image. All human knowledge at best just throws a little light on some subjects.

But the Bible is the revelation by the author, by the maker, to reveal where man came from, what his purpose is, what the future holds. It reveals God to man.

The whole Bible is a revelation of God. It's God. He's the feature, right? So, Adam is not the real hero of Genesis. Neither is Noah, Abraham or Joseph.

God is. Deborah and Samson were not the real deliverers in the time of the judges. God was. Samuel, Saul and David did not really establish the kingdom of Israel. God did.

[18:54] Amos finds the heart of his message in the picture of God's justice. Hosea in God's love. Isaiah and Ezekiel in God's holiness. So, it's all about God. And the New Testament does not centre around the apostles or the church, but around Jesus.

It's interesting. I heard it put. It's not really the acts of the apostles. It's the acts of the Holy Spirit. You know, it's all about God. It's what God does. Not the apostles so much, but it's about what he does. So, our Lord in his life, his ministry and death shows us God.

He reveals God's character. He makes the word of God take on new meaning. From Genesis to Revelation, the whole Bible is the picture of God. So, we've got this truth of the revelation, of the revelation of God through his word.

So, the next truth is what's called the canon. So, just to explain this technical word, the canon, C-A-N-O-N. It's from a Greek word.

It refers to this measuring rod, this straight edge, this ruler. And it came to mean like a standard to rule something, to judge something by. So, you see here, the 66 books.

[20:01] You've got the books of the law, the books of history, the books of poetry. You've got the major prophets, the minor prophets. It's like this bookshelf of all these kinds of books. And they're in assorted categories, in groups.

So, you've got the Gospels, as we get to the New Testament. You've got church history, which is the book of Acts. You've got Paul's epistles. And then you've got the general epistles. And so, that's called the canon.

That's the 66 books that we have in our Bibles. And so, this word canon, basically, it just means the 66 books that have been chosen and included in the canon. So, these are the books that, as the word canon, this measuring rod kind of pictures, is how they measured these books to test them, to see if they had these qualities that showed them to be inspired of God and authoritative, considered to be the rule of faith and practice for the church.

And the Holy Spirit guided the people, as they made this selection of these 66 books, to recognize they were the writings that were genuinely inspired.

This happened in 90 AD and 393 AD, 397 AD. They confirmed the books. Now, what happened later, much, much later, when really Roman Catholicism was in full sway, in 1545 to 1563, the Council of Trent, which was really a Roman Catholic council, included 14 other books into the cover of the Bible called the Apocrypha.

[21:36] Now, the Apocrypha books, they were really unreliable, full of historical and geographical errors. And it's interesting, these Old Testament Apocrypha, they were never in the recognized books of the Hebrew canon.

So, they were never recognized as of divine origin. They were never recognized as scripture by the Jews, never recognized within the New Testament or by any of the early church fathers, the church leaders.

So, I know I've had this question posed to me at times. Well, how do you know there's not other books to add to the 66, you know? Some would try to include the Old Testament Apocrypha.

And then there's other, like, New Testament Apocrypha books too. But they really don't stack up. When you actually examine them, and I've got numbers of them at home, different New Testament ones.

I've got a book that thick with New Testament Apocrypha. And then there's the Old Testament Apocrypha, 14 books of the Old Testament. And they really don't measure up in terms of the divine authority or the confirmation of them.

[22:41] They're more, there might be some useful historical purposes, but some of them are actually outright doubtful, very doubtful, and could be just manufactured kind of books.

So, but the truth that we have, the 66 books have had that stamp of authority over them right from the early church days. So, we can be assured that the 66 books are absolutely guaranteed and certain and reliable.

And they've got God's stamp of authority on them. So, that's called the canon of Scripture. The next truth is about illumination. So, when we come to the Word of God, we want God to illuminate, to shine His light, to make them clear to us, to enlighten us.

Like when you shine your light on something that you're reading, so you can see it clearly. And the Holy Spirit helps us to understand the Bible. When you think of it, man's understanding has been darkened by sin.

But God's Spirit is this light. He shines His light on the Scriptures to help us to understand. So, illumination, it talks about the work of the Holy Spirit to help us to understand and apply the Word.

[23:53] And the Bible is written on our heart. It's written for our heart. And the Holy Spirit helps us to understand it as we open our heart to Him. And we ask Him to help us as we pray that we'll receive His truth.

And so, a really good prayer to pray is Psalm 119, verse 18, where it says, Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

Asking God to open our eyes to help us to understand that we can behold the wonderful things from His Word. So, we see the other scripture up there on the screen, 1 Corinthians 2, verse 14, talks about how the natural man cannot receive it.

Because these truths are spiritually discerned. So, there's that need that we have for the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Word of God, to help us to get the truth to our heart.

So, illumination, that's another truth about the Bible. Prophecy is a big thing that, again, sets the Bible apart from really all other kinds of books.

[25:01] The Bible is unique about prophecy, fulfilled prophecy. It accurately predicts the future. So, there's some 3,856 verses directly or indirectly talking about the future, talking about prophecy.

That amounts to one verse in six tells of future events, which is quite amazing, isn't it? And when you think about prophecies in the Bible, some were made hundreds of years in advance.

And very clear and specific at times. And they all came to pass as predicted. So, much prophecy has already been fulfilled. We see in your notes there the destruction of Tyre, the invasion of Jerusalem, the fall of Babylon and Rome.

They've been accurately predicted. And they've all come true, fulfilled to the smallest detail. Then in the life of Christ alone, there's over 300 fulfilled prophecies.

So, you can see there on the screen, there's around 350 prophecies about the Lord, 300 fulfilled at his first coming. There's still prophecies yet of his next coming, yet to be fulfilled.

[26:05] Another thing about the Bible is it's got a supreme appeal. So, it's got this amazing attraction to the world. When we think about the circulation of the Bible, the Bible's been read by more people, published in more languages, translated, retranslated, paraphrased more than any other book.

It's contents. It's got this universal message for all, young and old. And the contents, it's immense. The literature, the history, the prophecy, the poetry, the drama, the stories of love and war.

The Bible's also current. It's an ancient book, yet it's more current than the daily news. If you're looking for truth, it's telling it what's going to happen ahead of time. It's current in the sense that it's relevant, it's real, and we can make it relevant and apply it for our own lives.

And the other thing about the Bible that makes it attractive and appealing is that it reveals our Lord. Christ is there right through the book. It's Christ in all the scriptures.

Next thing about the Bible is that it's got amazing impact on society, a social influence. So when you think about it, our laws, a lot of them are framed from that basis, the legal code, marriage, family, womanhood, childhood, dignifying the aged, bringing compassion.

[27:30] A lot of hospitals were built because of Christianity. A lot of those sort of social reforms of history. That's because of the Bible. And

it's also had a massive impact on art, music, literature.

One thing I found interesting, you might have heard this too, but maybe not, but the familiar story of the mutiny on the Bounty, when that happened in 1789.

And they took over the ship and did their own thing, these mutineers, and they ended up sailing to Pitcairn Islands.

In 1808, they were found there. And what the people found who discovered them in 1808 was that the island was now inhabited by 35 English-speaking people of Polynesian descent.

And they were practising the Christian faith. What happened was they had a Bible there, and they call it, there's a stamp there that's celebrating it. It's called the Bounty Bible, or the Pitcairn Bible, it's called.

[28:35] So that Bible that they took off the Bounty, as much as they had some times of violence and there was a lot of alcohol and trouble and disorder, when they actually, one of them got rid of the alcohol, they destroyed the still.

And they got the Bible, and they started to learn. It was actually an illiterate man, learnt the Bible, and then he was able to teach the Bible to the Polynesians.

You know, they're married into that Polynesian culture, and they actually started to practise the Christian faith. It was just from having a Bible. They actually just took the Bible and read it and practised it, and so such was the impact of the Bible, when one of the mutineers took that Bible and followed it and had faith.

So it's an amazing story there about the influence of the Bible. Just one Bible had such an amazing influence. Another great thing about the Bible that really sets it apart is its survival.

Just the very fact that we've got a Bible today. When you think about the persecution that's happened, the hatred, the efforts of people to destroy the Bible, to burn it, to destroy it.

[29:53] And you see that through time, really only a small percentage of books survive more than 20 years. But the Bible survived for thousands of years. And in fact, there's thousands of ancient copies of the Bible, a vast number than any other ancient book.

It's even more amazing when you think, well, these books were handwritten. They were copied and recopied and carefully written by these Jewish scribes so that they made sure that it was all very accurate.

And the Bible's been subject to a lot of vicious attacks. So many have tried to burn it, ban it, outlaw it. In the days of the Roman emperors and even in the present day communists, thousands of martyrs have died so that we can have the Bible in our language.

One of the ones who hated the Bible, Voltaire, a French philosopher said, he boasted, in 100 years this book will be forgotten. But 100 years after his boast, his house is now being used as the headquarters for the Geneva Bible Society.

And then people tried to destroy the Bible by criticism as well. And yet it's withstood all of those attacks. So the Bible survived. It's another testament to the fact that it's God's book.

[31:10] Next section, we go to scientific accuracy. So you've got the testimony of science as well. The Bible does not contradict the well-established facts of science.

So think, it talks about physics and chemistry, the fact that the universe is running down, the human body is made of the basic earth's elements. Water returns to its source.

Of course, you've got the cycle of water as it evaporates and then it forms clouds and then it descends as rain. It's all pictured there. It's all described there in the Bible. It's a scientific process.

Then you've got biology, the fact that life does not emerge from non-life. Life is incredibly complex. Life is in the blood. And then you've got sanitation as a way of avoiding the spread of disease.

So biology. Then you've got geology in the Bible too, where we see that the truth and science still basically sees that really basic forms of animal life begin all at once.

[32:10] That's what they found. And life forms remain basically the same. All types of life begin fully formed. And then you've got archaeology too, that despite all the searchings of archaeologists, nothing's been found that contradicts the Bible.

It all supports the Bible. And we could talk, you know, a whole lot about all those sort of things to confirm that with you. I'm just really scratching the surface. The next truth about the Bible is that there's a preservation of the Bible.

Again, it's survived thousands of years. Do we have the Word of God? Yes, we do. We know for sure we've got the Word of God. It tells us that Proverbs 30 verse 5, every word of God is pure. He's a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. So God's promised, numbers of times, there's other references there, God's promised to preserve His Word. And here's a quote here, the King James Bible is from a superior text translated by superior translators into a superior English. So it's a faithful translation of the faithful text. And so we can know for sure we've got the Bible, that we've got an accurate Bible, an authoritative Bible, a trustworthy Bible.

[33:22] When you think about Bible manuscripts, they've survived despite weather, persecution and time. Even though they've been on weak materials, yet we've got many copies of the scriptures that have survived.

We've got the Dead Sea Scrolls, they date back to before the time of Christ. So we've got ancient copies of the Bible. In contrast, you've got a secular one there, Julius Caesar's Gallic Wars. There's only ten copies that are in existence, only ten. But in contrast, you've got over 24,000 New Testament manuscripts. So the earliest ones dating really to just a few years after the Lord. So we can know that we've got God's Word as we've got it translated faithfully in the King James Bible. And we can know that that's an assured text. There's some 5,300 complete New Testament manuscripts in the original Greek that still exist today.

Only ten of them leave out some portions. So Acts 8.37, we've got Philip address the eunuch and say, What hinders me to be baptized?

[34:32] And he says, If thou believe with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he says, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. In some modern Bibles, they take that out, Acts 8.37. And yet, 5,332 have got it in.

Only ten of those portions leave it out. But these modern Bibles go with those very few. So there were 54 translators of the King James, and they fluently spoke between three and ten languages. So they were very skillful people. And then you see in the chart there, just how you see the different manuscript streams. So you've got the doubtful manuscripts, and then you've got the reliable manuscripts.

So 90 to 95% of manuscripts are that which the King James is translated from, whereas the other, only some 5 to 10% support what are largely the modern Bible.

So it's a whole big subject we might talk more about at another time. Next issue, we've got the Bible survey. And we'll probably do another session on that too, particularly on New Testament survey, Old Testament survey.

[35:45] But just as a kind of overview, as someone has described it here, I thought it was really quite good how they put it. That you can look at the Bible, the story of the Bible, as really an unfolding drama of redemption.

So if you think about a drama, a play, the producer of the drama is God. You've got the stage, which is the world. The setting is the world. The actors are God, man, Satan, angels, demons. The theme of the drama is redemption, salvation. The main character is Christ. Then you've got the Acts 1 and Acts 2. So Act 1 is the Old Testament.

Act 2, the New Testament. It's kind of an interesting way of looking at it that it's like a drama. This whole 66 books are painting this one common story.

And so the two Testaments, they do not contradict each other. One complements the other. They're like two acts in a dramatic play. So you see the Old Testament predicts Christ to come, prepares the way for him.

[36:49] The New Testament presents Christ and proclaims him. The Old Testament converges on Christ. The New Testament emerges from Christ. Yeah, here's how someone has put it, which is a bit of a common kind of saying that people have about the Bible.

That there's two parts of the one whole. So as someone has described it here. So the New Testament is in the old concealed. The old is in the new revealed.

The New Testament is in the old contained. The Old Testament is in the new explained. So that's an interesting way of putting it. So when you think about this drama that unfolds, that is the salvation story, we see it begins in Genesis, like the roots there.

Then we see the stem in the Old Testament. We see the flower in the life and work of Christ in the Gospels. We see the fruit in the church, in Acts and the epistles. Then we see the harvest, the ultimate harvest in the book of Revelation.

So God's plan unfolds through the whole book. And we see that it begins with one man, Abraham, continues with his family. They become a nation.

[37:58] This nation is miraculously protected in spite of being scattered and taken captive. A remnant is regathered from whom Christ the Saviour is born. And God's plan now is to use the church to reach the world with the gospel of God's salvation.

Of course, there's still a place for Israel in all that. And then we see that Christ is coming back to judge the world and reign over the world and the universe. So we see that through Abraham and his descendants, God showed all men what he is like.

In Halley's Handbook, it says, In founding the Hebrew nation, God's ultimate object was to bring Christ into the world. God's immediate object was to establish in a world of idolatry, as a background to the coming of Christ, the idea that there is one true living God.

So we see that full revelation of God, and then there'll be the final summing up of it in his coming again. Just some practical kind of thoughts about how do we study the Bible then?

We've heard about the Bible, the truth of it, some of the features of it, the characteristics of it. How do we study the Bible? So we've got a few ideas here of how you can actually put some of this into action, how you can actually learn about the Bible and study it.

[39:14] So someone's put some four steps here about effective Bible study. So observation, what does the passage say? Look at the context, the content. Interpretation, what does it mean?

Try to understand it and dig a bit deeper. Then application, how does it apply to me? What does it say to me personally? And then lastly, what am I going to do about it?

Putting it into that personal action. When you read the Bible, you can study it in all kinds of ways. Some people, they study it by books. You know, you go book by book. Or you can go repeatedly reading a short book over and over again.

Or chapters, read them over and over again for 30 days. So as you read it repeatedly, you'll start to get a grasp of it. Some people read it by need.

So if you lack assurance of salvation, some have suggested to read 1 John. 30 days of 1 John. And then you'll be sure. Because 1 John, the theme is all about that assurance of salvation.

[40:19] And then of course you can read the book entirely. So start with the Bible, with the New Testament. Read through book by book. Read through the whole book, the whole Bible if you can.

And you can do that. I think it's about 4 chapters a day. You can get through the whole Bible in a year. And there's different reading plans you can get. If people want that, I can give you one.

Or you can look them up on the internet. Look for a daily reading plan. It gives you ways you can break it down day by day. So you might have an Old Testament reading and a New Testament reading.

And so you cover the whole Bible over a year time span. A preacher, Maia, said this. Read the Bible not as a newspaper, but as a letter.

If a cluster of heavenly fruit hangs within reach, gather it. If a promise lies upon a page as a blank check, cash it. If a prayer is recorded, appropriate it.

[41:15] And launch it as a feathered arrowhead from the bow of your desire. If an example of holiness gleams before you, ask God to do as much for you. If the truth is revealed in all its intrinsic splendor, entreat the brilliance may ever radiate the hemisphere of your life.

So in other words, you look at the Bible as God's letter. You grab what you can of its fruit, of its promises. You claim them. You pray.

Those examples of holiness you can follow. It's truth you can apply. Here's another way someone's put it about studying the Bible. It says, pray.

Pray before you start. So again, open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Ask God to illuminate. So it's really important when we come to the Bible that we ask God to guide us and lead us.

And ask him to help us. So pray. Next one, read. Read it through. In 1 Timothy 4.30 it says, give attention to reading.

[42:18] So as you read, check the meanings of the words, the English words or even the underlying words. Think about the context. Try to discover the purpose of the writer.

So read it. It's good too to read it out loud as well. Because sometimes it helps you to grasp it when you actually read it out loud. Read it out loud.

Next one there, search it out. As the ones in Berea there, they were more noble. It says, they received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the scriptures daily whether those things were so.

So they searched the scriptures. You know, testing out what they were being told, what they were being preached to make sure it was fitting with the scriptures. So compare verses with others on the same theme.

Look up cross references as well. And any other kind of interconnected verses. It's really important that we compare verses with others.

[43:18] Because sometimes people get one verse and they take it out of context. And then they build a doctrine on one verse or a couple of verses rather than taking the whole picture of the Bible.

So you've got to search it out. Write it down. It's good when you go to the Bible and you go to study the Bible to maybe whatever helps you to learn. So whether writing it down, having a notebook, write down what God shows you so you can keep a record.

Meditate on it. It says of the blessed man that he meditates day and night in his law, the word of God. Pondering it, meditating it. Ask God to show you how his word applies to your life.

Memorize it. Memorize it. That's really important too. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. So it's good to hide the word of God in your heart. Especially if you can find that, and I can give you a list of verses to even start with, like a hundred verses to memorize.

You know, you could get a hundred verses, two hundred verses. But some of the key verses that are good for you to memorize. So if you want that, just let me know, I can give you a copy of that. It's good to memorize the verses that are God's promises.

[44:25] So that you can have them in your mind when you face a trial or a test or life circumstances. You can memorize the word and bring it to your mind. Again, speak it out. As I said before, confess the word of God.

There's power as we speak the word of God. Speak it out. Next one, obey it. Of course, we're told, be you doers of the word, not hearers only. Try to put it into practice in your life.

And then teach it as well. Teach it to others. It talks about admonishing every man, teaching every man. The best way to learn something is to teach it to others. So if there's opportunity for you to help disciple a younger Christian, then seize that opportunity.

Come alongside others and help them to learn. Here's another list of things you can do to help learn the Bible. What we should do with the Bible. It says, Know it in the head.

Stow it in the heart. Show it in the life. Sow it in the world. Read it to be wise. Believe it to be safe. Practice it to be holy. So knowing it in your head, sort of get familiar with it.

[45:29] Stow it in your heart. So that's hiding it in your heart.

Memorizing it. Living it. Showing it in your life. Sowing it in the world. Talk about like sharing it with others. Witnessing.

Telling others about the Lord. Read it to be wise. Believe it to be safe. Practice it to be holy. And there's another load of verses there. Another load of suggestions there.

How to read it. Read it slowly. Frequently. Prayerfully. Reverently. Dig it up. Write it down. Live it out. Pass it on. Lots of benefits for us. As we.

God helping us. Gives us the. Energy and the. Application to study the word of God. Many benefits. The word of God changes. Us. Doesn't it?

Here's. How someone summed up as well. What the word of God does. It will bring life. Talks about the word of God is quick. Or it's alive. It's powerful. The word of God brings life.

[46:26] It's. Helps us to be equipped. It says that the man of God can be. Thru'ly furnished. Like. Thoroughly equipped. Unto all good works.

It's God's. Resource for us. To equip us. The word of God helps to build you. Build you up. As it says in Acts 20. 32. The word of God is able to build you up.

The word of God helps you to grow. 1 Peter 2. Verse 2. As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word. That you may grow thereby. The word of God brings joy.

1 John 1. 4. It says. These things be right unto you. That your joy may be full. And then. It brings comfort and hope as well. Romans 15. 4.

Paul says. For whatsoever things were written aforetime. Were written for our learning. That we through patience and comfort of the scriptures. Might have hope. So when you think about the Bible. It's comfort isn't it.

[47:23] For the hurting heart. It's guidance. To the searching. The lost. It guides us through life. To eternity. Leads us to that relationship. With our Lord. Psalm 19.

Has got a lot of truth in it as well. This is a good scripture to. Try to learn as well. It's all about the word of God. Psalm 19. From verse 7 through 11.

And you see the words of highlights. Some of the characteristics of the word of God. It says. The law of the Lord is perfect. Converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure. Making wise the simple.

The statutes of the Lord are right. Rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure. Enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean. Enduring forever. The judgments of the Lord are true.

And righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold. Yea, than much fine gold. Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned.

[48:20] And in keeping of them there is great reward. So we see God's word is perfect. It's sure. It's right. It's pure. It's clean.

It's true. It's righteous. To be desired. Sweeter than honey. The word of God. It's got a great reward. How to learn the scriptures.

Ask God to bring understanding. Again, that scripture. That the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God. For they are foolishness unto him.

Neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. Now we need God's help when we open the word. To learn it. To understand it. To get his leading. Devotional reading.

Devotional reading is good. To have a regular chunk of scripture. As you have time put aside to. Study. Have a systematic study of the word.

[49:18] Through observing, interpreting, applying. Meditation. Allow the scripture to speak to your mind. As it soaks into your mind. And you fill your mind with God's truth.

And then memorization. That it becomes a living, active part of our lives. Lay it up in your heart. So we got there. Psalm 119.11. Thy word have I heard in mine heart.

That I might not sin against thee. And then it says. 2 Timothy 2.15. Study. To show thyself approved unto God a workman. That needeth not to be ashamed.

Rightly dividing. The word of truth. And of course it says there. That we should receive with meekness the engrafted word. Which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word.

Not hearers only. Deceiving your own selves. Here's some more principles. And these are kind of different collections of things. Some of them saying the same thing.

[50:16] But there's lots of different ways to approach Bible study. But one suggestion here is to read the book through. And really when you think about it. You could read through one whole Bible book.

In at least four hours or less. You know some Bible books you can read just in a few minutes. But if you read through the whole book. You get the whole picture of that book. And so you get a bird's eye view of that one book.

And then you can kind of spy out the land. If you've got the bird's eye view. You can see the whole picture of the book. And so then you can pick up the main controlling thought of the book. The

structural divisions of the book.

Kind of the pattern of the book. As you read the book right through. Another way to examine the Bible is to ask these questions. What, where, why, when, how and who.

It's like, why is this? When is it? How is it? Who is it? All of these different questions. You could pick that Bible verse apart.

[51:15] And kind of analyze it with those different questions you can ask of it. Or that passage. Analyze the content. Scrutinize it. Ask, what is the Bible writer saying?

Analyze it. So you can study by topics. By doctrines. By events. By places. Duties. Words. Biographies.

Of course you've got the old covenant. The new covenant. Some things are clear. You've got studies in types as well. As we talked about. The different types and meanings. And then you can do a biographical study.

So pick a person in the Bible. Pick one of the prophets. One of the players of the Bible. And study that person where he appears. And learn about him or her.

And the particular traits that you can pick up. Whether they've got failings or shortcomings. Or faults. Maybe they had a crisis in their life. What they learned. What spiritual lessons did they learn.

[52:11] And how can you make use of that yourself. So just lastly. One last thing. To put across as a practical. Kind of suggestion.

How you can put the Bible. Into practice in your life. Is try to have a consistent. Study habit. Try to develop some consistent.

Daily Bible reading. Or some regular. Time or place that you go to. The Word of God. Learn to be consistent. Like. Practice self-discipline.

When you think about it. If you're studying something. Even if you're studying something. Secular wise. You've got to have. The application of energy. Of diligence. Of.

Consistency. And you think of sports athletes. That they. Commit to it. What about committing to the Word of God. That you can have that habit. You know.

[53:08] Believer here tonight. That you can be like. An athlete would be. That you want to learn something. You want to get stronger in it. You want to develop. Muscles. And to develop. Spiritual muscles.

Have that consistency. With Bible study. So even if you. Could just commit. To at least 15 minutes a day. Just something like that. To have some.

Consistent time. To read the Bible. Have that self-discipline. To. Dedicate some time. Every day. So. Some.

Some practical suggestions. Read it daily. Job 23. 12. I believe that's the one. Where he says that. That he's desired the Word of God. More than his daily food.

So he wanted it. More than having food. Was to have the spiritual food. Of the Word of God. So. Finding that regular time. And place. Coming prayerfully. To study the Word.

[54:04] And. Looking. Not just with your eyes. But with your mind as well. Trying to. Grasp the truth of it. And apply it. Some have suggested.

Using a spiritual diary. So if you have some kind of notepad. Or some way of recording. What's God's message for me today. In this Bible reading. Is it a promise. A command. Is it.

Something he's trying to point out. To me some principle. Is it some example. I can learn from.

Some personal. Application. So. Again. Applying the Bible personally.

It's God's love letter to you. The Word of God isn't it. And when we think about it. It's. Really how God speaks to us. Is through. His Word. That's the best way.

That we can hear God. Is to. Go to his. Precious Word. And. Ask the Holy Spirit. To show us. And so we can see God's commands as well. The specific things. For example.

[55:00] It tells us about. Wives. Of husbands. Of children. The specific things. He addresses. Of practical life. And. We can think about the characters of the Bible.

And. What they. Experienced. Their problems. And. Solutions. They found. And. Hopefully spiritual truth. That they applied. We've.

Got something. Out of it. As we. We've looked at these things. That we've talked about. We looked at the Bible. It's unique. It's one of a kind. There's no other book like it. It's inspired. So it's breathed out by God.

It's got a unity. It's got an inerrancy. So there's no fault. It's got an authority. It's got a sufficiency. Everything we need. It's got a revelation. It's. It's got a stamp of authority.

Those 66 books. We don't need to add to them. We don't need extra biblical revelation. We've got the revelation in the 66 books. It's. There's the truth of illumination. That the author is with us. As we read it. We can ask him to help us understand it. It's got this huge influence over the world. Over laws.

[55:56] Over. Social. Life. We see what happened in the mutiny on the bouncy. The whole. It's got this huge influence over the world. Over laws. Over. Social.

Life. We see what happened in the mutiny on the bouncy. The whole. The whole. The whole society was built. Just by taking the Bible out of that ship. And putting it into practice.

The Bible's got this huge story of survival. Through history. Martyrs have bled and died for us to have this book. It's got scientific accuracy. God's preserved it.

We've got an accurate Bible in our hands. A faithful Bible. It's like this drama. This unfolding drama. And we can learn those. Kind of tools and skills of effective Bible study.

That we can actually. That we can actually. Determine. Like an athlete would determine. That they want to grow stronger physically. We can determine that we want to grow stronger spiritually. By thinking.

[56:51] How can I study the Bible more consistently? How can I study the Bible more regularly? How can I have that. Prayerful. Study habit. To learn. To grow. To.

To put it into my. Own life. So I pray you'd be challenged in that regard tonight. Let us pray. Lord we thank you for your word. That it is. A wonderful. Book.

It's your love letter to man. And Lord all the truths that we need to truly live. A life. Are there contained. Lord we just got to find them and search them out. Help us Lord to be more faithful and diligent.

In turning to your word. To find its truth. Truth. And to find your help. To seek your help as we do that. Lord that you would be glorified. In our lives we pray in Jesus name.

Amen.